

56 Facts About Blood

General Facts

1. Dr. Karl Landsteiner identified the first three human blood cell types in 1900, labeling them A, B, and C. Blood type C was later changed to O, and blood cell type AB was discovered in 1902.¹
2. One unit of blood can be separated into several components: red blood cells, plasma and platelets.
3. Red blood cells carry oxygen to the body's organs and tissues.
4. Red blood cells live about 120 days in the circulatory system.
5. Women and girls receive 53% of blood transfusions; men and boys receive 47 percent.
6. The average adult body contains 10 pints of blood.⁵
7. A newborn baby has about 1 cup of blood in his body.⁵
16. Blood is full of antigens; the antigens within blood is often very similar within ethnic groups. Antigens in donated blood need to closely match the antigens within the transfusion patient.²
17. Blood that closely matches that of a patient is less likely to be rejected by the patient and can mean fewer complications after a transfusion.
18. Type O negative red cells can be given to patients of all blood types. Because only 11.24% of Versiti's donations are type O negative, it's often in great demand and short supply.
19. African American and Hispanic people are more likely to need O group (positive or negative) blood.²
20. Children being treated for cancer, premature infants, and children having heart surgery need blood and platelets from donors of all types, especially type O.

Your Health

8. Giving blood will not decrease your strength in the long-term.
9. Donating blood burns 650 calories.
10. Easiest way to discover your blood type? Donate blood!
11. Blood makes up about 7% of your body's weight.
12. Every time you donate blood, you receive a mini physical for free.
13. Many diseases do NOT exempt people from donating blood, including diabetes, asthma and Lyme disease.
14. You cannot get HIV/ AIDS or any other infectious disease by donating blood.



Diversity Matters

15. Sickle cell disease is an inherited disease that affects more than 100,000 people in the US; 1 out of every 365 Black or African-American births & 1 out of every 16,300 Hispanic-American births. Blood transfusions are often used in treatment.²



21. The "universal donor" for plasma is type AB, because individuals of all types can receive plasma of this type.
22. Many US blood banks run short of types O and B red blood cells.
23. Versiti donor population by ethnicity:

Asian	1.29%	Native	0.19%
Black	2.39%	White	91.40%
Latino	3.67%	Other	1.06%

24. US population by blood type:

O+ 38%	A+ 34%	B+ 9%	AB+ 3%
O- 7%	A- 6%	B- 2%	AB- 1%

Where Does It Go?

25. More than 4.5 million patients would die each year without lifesaving blood transfusions in the U.S. and Canada.
26. Just one blood donation can save up to 3 lives.

27. A single car accident victim can require as many as 100 units of blood.
28. According to the American Cancer Society, more than 1.8 million people will be diagnosed with cancer in 2020. Many of them will frequently require blood transfusions during their chemotherapy treatment.⁴
29. Plasma – which is 90 percent water – is often used in the treatment of burn victims.
30. Patients with kidney issues may need blood transfusions to increase red blood cell levels.
31. The average red-blood-cell transfusion uses 3 units of donated blood.³
32. Platelets promote blood clotting and can give people with leukemia and other cancers a chance to live.
33. More than 75 percent of all Americans reaching age 72 will need donated blood within their lifetime; 97 percent will have a loved one who will need blood.
34. Platelet transfusions are often a necessary, lifesaving procedure for cancer, transplant and trauma patients.¹
35. A patient needing an organ transplant could be forced to pass up lifesaving surgery if compatible blood is not available to support the transplant.
36. Someone needs blood every 2 seconds.
37. Every day in the U.S., 29,000 units of red blood cells are required in hospitals and emergency treatment facilities.¹
38. On average, 1 in every 7 people entering a hospital will need blood.

How Donations Work

39. The donation process is segmented into 5 parts: registration, questionnaire, mini physical, blood collection and refreshments.
40. The process for whole blood donation usually takes about one hour. The blood collection itself is usually about 10 minutes.
41. Two units of red blood cells can be donated at one time, using a process known as red cell apheresis. This type of donation can be made every 16 weeks.
42. Donated platelets must be used within 5 days.
43. Donated red blood cells must be used within 42 days.



44. Donated plasma must be used within 365 days.
45. Apheresis is a special kind of blood donation that allows a donor to give one specific blood component, such as platelets or plasma.
46. Blood drives hosted by companies, schools, places of worship and civic organizations supply roughly half of all blood donations across Versiti's Midwest landscape.
47. Whole blood can be donated every 56 days, plasma every 28 days, platelets every 14 days, and double red cell donations every 112 days.
48. Every blood donation goes through 14 rigorous tests to ensure a safe blood supply.

People Need People

49. Seventeen percent of people who don't give blood cite "never thought about it" as the main reason for not donating, while 15 percent say they're "too busy."
50. The #1 reason blood donors say they give is that they "want to help others."
51. Shortages of all blood types most often occur during summer and winter holidays.
52. There is no substitute for human blood.
53. If just 1 percent more of Americans donated blood, shortages would disappear.
54. About 37 out of every 100 Americans are eligible to donate blood – but only 3 to 4 people donate each year.
55. Hospitals can only receive blood from volunteer donors.
56. You can help by booking your appointment to donate blood by visiting [Versiti.org](https://www.versiti.org) or give us a call:



IL 800-786-4483

IN 800-632-4722

MI 866-642-5663

OH 800-485-6594

WI 877-232-4376

Versiti.org - Versiti Blood Center

¹ AABB.org – American Association of Blood Banks

² CDC.gov – Center for Disease Control & Prevention

³ The 2007 National Blood Collection and Utilization Survey Report, US Department of Health & Human Services

⁴ The American Cancer Society

⁵ Livescience.com

⁶ Facilitators and Barriers to Minority Blood Donations